THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) The number of job-seekers on the Live Register of Employment Exchanges as on 28.2.1987 (latest available) was 305.13 lakhs.

(b) The number of medical and engineering graduates including post-graduates who were on the Live Register of Employment Exchanges as on 30.6.1986 (latest available) was 0.26 and 0.39 lakhs respectively.

(c) Information not available.

Equal pay for Male and Female employees

1033. SHRIMATI KRISHNA KAUL: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that several companies refuse to pay female employees salary equal to that paid to male employees;

(b) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the plea of M/s. Mackinon Mackenzie and Co. that women employees cannot be paid wages equal to men; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken by Government to end this discrmination?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) Some cases of non-payment of equal wages to female workers have come to the notice of Government. The Equal Remuneration Act which provides for the payment of remuneration to men and women for doing the same work or work of a similar nature also provides for authorities to decide claims and complaints under the Act, and for prosecutions to be taken up for violations of the Act. As and when a violation is detected or a complaint comes to the notice of Government, appropriate action is taken under the Act.

(b) Yes Sir. In the case of M/s. Mackinon Mackenzie and Company the affected woman employee sought relief before the competent authority and subsequently before the appellate authority under the Equal Remuneration Act. The relief was granted. Against these orders the Company went on appeal to the Bombay High Court and the Supreme Court but lost their case.

(c) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Supply of defence Equipments to Sri Lanka by Pakistan

1034. SHRIMATI KRISHNA KAUL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the supply of $ 1m defence equipment to Sri Lanka by Pakistan and also to the training of Sri Lanka army personnel;

(b) whether this action of Pakistan is likely to hamper peace efforts in Sri Lanka; and

(c) if so, the action Government propose to take in this regard especially in view of the presence of Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) Government have seen press reports regarding the supply of defence equipment by Pakistan to Sri Lanka. Government are also aware of defence training by Pakistan to Sri Lanka Army personnel.

(b) Government is convinced that there can be no military solution to the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka. Anything which encourages a resort to the military option at the expense of political negotiations is bound to hinder the peace progress.